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*Moral Pieces in Prose and Verse. By Lydia Huntley.
Hartford, 12mo. pp. 267.*

THE mass of poetry is constantly accumulating in the world. The English have of late years furnished a larger quantity than any other nation, but we have not been idle. We however consume less paper, and absorb less capital. Our contributions are generally in modest duodecimos, with small type, and narrow margin; in England, large types, wide margins, and black-letter ornaments, decorate the pompous volume of quarto dimension. The only difference is, that dulness here is attired with plainness and frugality, and there, accompanied with ostentation and expense. We are strongly inclined to believe, that when four or five of their candidates for fame are withdrawn from the lists, that those who remain, would not be found superiour to ours, except numerically. Indeed, if the number of those, who busy themselves with the composition of poetical trifles, for few of our versifiers attempt any thing else, were once ascertained, the publick would be as much surprised at the extent of the lists, as they were in England, at the report made by Mr. Whitbread, to the proprietors of Drury-Lane Theatre, on the crowd of dramattick authors.*

The volume before us contains a mixture of prose and poetry, of which, the latter we think the best. Many of the pieces are given as compositions, addressed to young girls under the writer's charge, and are well adapted for that purpose, though they do not appear to much advantage in this collection. Miss Huntley, we have been informed, is a most deserving and interesting young woman, who, in the most adverse circumstances, has educated herself; and, by constant exertion, providing for the support of some relatives, as well as for her own, has emancipated herself from the humblest penury, and still found leisure at a very early

* But it was said that there was a great scarcity of writers as well as of actors. Of good writers and of good actors there might not be a great number. In what age were there ever many? They all knew that there was one most distinguished dramattick writer now living, if they could only prevail on him to write; but that there was a scarcity of writers he begged leave to deny. They had received no less than 176 new dramas. Their judgment might be disputed, but they had bestowed on them the most patient attention. Of these they had been forced, in the exercise of their discretion, to pronounce against 141 of the number, which had been returned. Several had been brought out, eight were now under discussion, and eleven they knew not where to deliver.—*Extract from Mr. Whitbread's report.*

age, to compose this volume. Worth of this kind would have been a strong motive for subscribing to the book, but not sufficient to have noticed it here, if the verses themselves had not possessed very considerable merit. Our opinion of them will, we think, be confirmed, by our readers, when they have perused the following extracts from the collection.

INTRODUCTION.

“ A damp and dewy wreath that grew
Upon the breast of Spring,
A harp whose tones are faint and few,
With trembling hand I bring.

“ The clang of war, the trumpet's roar,
May drown the feeble note,
And down to Lethe's silent shore,
The scatter'd wreath may float.

“ But He, who taught the flowers to spring
From waste neglected ground,
And gave the silent harp a string
Of wild and nameless sound ;

“ Commands my spirit not to trust,
Her happiness with these :
A bloom that moulders back to dust,
A musick soon to cease.

“ But seek those flowers unstain'd by time,
To constant virtue given,
And for that harp of tone sublime,
Which seraphs wake in Heaven.”

ON THE DOVE'S LEAVING THE ARK.

“ Still did an unseen Being guide
The lonely vessel o'er the tide,
And still, with steady prow, it braves
The fury of the foaming waves.
While fierce the deluge pours its stream,
The thunders roll—the meteors gleam,
When Ocean's mighty cisterns broke,
And earth like a rent cottage shook,

And slowly as its axle turn'd,
The wat'ry planet mov'd and mourn'd;
Though trembling at the tempest's ire,
Or scorching in the lightning's fire,
While holding in her firm embrace
The remnant of a wasted race,
Still o'er the waves the wandering ark
Roam'd like some lone, deserted bark.
But now the storm has hush'd its ire,
The warring elements retire;
And from his curtains dusk and dun
Look'd forth, once more, th' astonish'd sun.

"What saw he there? Young Nature's face
With smiles, and joy, and beauty fair?
No! not one feature could he trace
To tell him life was ever there;
Save when that little bark was seen
To shew him where her pride *had been*.

"But now from that secure abode
A winged stranger went,
And from the casement open'd wide
A joyful flight she bent;
High mounting seem'd to seek the sky
With forward breast and sparkling eye,
Like captive set at liberty.

"So went the dove on errand kind,
To seek a mansion for mankind,
Though scarce her meek eye dar'd to trace
The horrors of that dreadful place.

"The waves with white and curling head
Swept above the silent dead,
The heaving billows' dashing surge
Hoarsely swell'd the hollow dirge;
The heavy weight of waters prest
The mighty monarch's mouldering breast,
The giant chief, the sceptred hand,
The lip that pour'd the loud command;
The blooming cheek—the sparkling eye,
Now shrouded in the sea-weed lie.

"But still the pensive stranger spread
Her white wing o'er that Ocean dread,
And oft her anxious eye she cast
Across that dark and shoreless waste.

For evening clad the skies in gloom,
And warn'd her of her distant home.
The stars that gemm'd the brow of night
Glanc'd coldly on her wavering flight,
In tears, the moon with trembling gleam
Withdrew her faint and faded beam,
And o'er that vast and silent grave
Was spread the dark and boundless wave.
With beating heart and anxious ear,
She strove some earthly sound to hear,
In vain—no earthly sound was near.
It seem'd the world's eternal sleep
Had settled o'er that gloomy deep,
Nor slightest breath her bosom cheer'd,
Her own soft wings alone she heard.

“ But still that fearful dove preserv'd,
With unabating care,
The olive leaf—the type of peace
All fragrant, fresh, and fair.

“ With pain her weary wing she stretch'd
Over the billows wide,
And oft her panting bosom dropp'd
Upon the briny tide.

“ The image of her absent mate,
That cheer'd her as she strove with fate,
Grew darker on her eye;
It seem'd as if she heard him mourn,
For one who never must return,
In broken minstrelsy.

“ Yet ere her pinions ceas'd their flight,
Or clos'd her eye in endless night,
A hand the weary wanderer prest
And drew her to the ark of rest.
Oh ! welcome to thy peaceful home,
No more o'er that wild waste to roam.

“ When from this cell of pain and woe,
Like that weak dove my soul shall go,
And trembling still her flight shall urge,
Along this dark world's doubtful verge,
O'er the cold flood, and foaming surge,
Then may the shrinking stranger spy
A pierc'd hand stretching from the sky,
Then hear a voice in accents blest,
' Return—return unto thy rest,'

Long prison'd in a wayward clime,
Long wounded with the thorns of time ;
Long chill'd by the wild storms that pour
Around that dark, deceitful shore,
Enter—where thorns shall wound and tempests rage
no more."

THE SUSCEPTIBLE MIND.

" Hast thou seen the Mimosa within its soft cell,
All shrinking and suffering stand,
And draw in its tendrils, and fold its young leaves,
From the touch of the tenderest hand ?

" Hast thou seen the young Aspen that trembles and sighs,
On the breath of the lingering wind ?
Oh ! these are but emblems, imperfect and faint,
Of the shrinking and sensitive mind.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. MR. WASHBURN, OF FARMINGTON,
CONNECTICUT, DURING A STORM AT MIDNIGHT, WHILE ON HIS PAS-
SAGE TO SOUTH-CAROLINA, FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS HEALTH, AC-
COMPANIED BY HIS WIFE.

" The southern gale awoke, its breath was mild,
The hoary face of mighty ocean smil'd ;
Silent he lay, and o'er his breast did move
A little bark that much he seem'd to love ;
He lent it favouring winds of steady force,
And bade the zephyrs waft it on its course ;
So on its trackless way, it mov'd sublime,
To hear the sick man to a softer clime.
Then night came on ; the humid vapours rose,
And scarce a gale would fan the dead repose ;
It seem'd as if the cradled storms did rest,
As infants dream upon the mother's breast.

But when deep midnight claim'd his drear domain,
And darkly prest the sick man's couch of pain,
The prison'd winds to fearful combat leap,
And rouse the wrathful spirit of the deep,
Th' impatient storms arose—their sleep was past,
The thunder roar'd a hoarse and dreadful blast,
The troubled bark was tost upon the wave,
The cleaving billows shew'd a ready grave,

The lightnings blaz'd insufferably bright,
 Forth rode a spirit on the wing of night;
 An unseen hand was there, whose strong control,
 Requir'd in that dread hour the sick man's soul,
 It struggled and was gone! to hear no more
 The whirlwinds sweeping, and the torrents roar,
 The rending skies, the loud and troubled deep,
 The agonizing friend, that wak'd to weep;
 No more to shrink before the tempest's breath,
 No more to linger in the pangs of death;
 No more! no more! it saw a purer sphere,
 Nor surging sea—nor vexing storms were there;
 Before his eye a spotless region spread,
 Where darkness rested not—or doubt or dread,
 And sickness sigh'd not there, and mortal ills were fled.”

AN EXCUSE FOR NOT FULFILLING AN ENGAGEMENT.

WRITTEN IN SCHOOL.

“ My friend, I gave a glad assent
 To your request at noon,
 But now I find I cannot leave
 My little ones so soon.

“ I early came, and as my feet
 First enter'd at the door,
 ‘ Remember’ to myself I said,
 ‘ You must dismiss at four.’

“ But slates, and books, and maps appear,
 And many a dear one cries,
 ‘ Oh, tell us where that river runs,
 And where those mountains rise ;

“ ‘And where that blind, old monarch reign'd,
 And who was king before,
 And stay a little after five,
 And tell us something more.’

“ And then my little A* * * * † comes,
 And who unmov'd can view,
 The glance of that imploring eye,
 ‘ Oh, teach me something too.’

† A child deprived of the powers of hearing, and of speech.

“ And who would think amid the toil,
 (Though scarce a toil it be.)
That through the door, the muses coy
 Should deign to peep at me.

“ Their look is somewhat cold and stern,
 As if it meant to say,
‘ We did not know you kept a school,
 We must have lost our way.’

“ Their visit was but short indeed,
 As these light numbers show ;
But Oh ! they bade me write with speed,
 My friend, I cannot go.”

MORNING THOUGHTS.

“ Awake ! Awake ! the rosy light
Looks through the parted veil of night ;
Awake ! arise ! short space hast thou
On earth, and much thou hast to do :
Another morn to thee is given,
Another gift from bounteous heaven
Is lent to thee, while many sleep
 To wake no more on earth again ;
Is sweet to thee, while many weep,
 Deep sunk in grief, or torn with pain
Oh, spring to life ! with joy renew'd,
And pour the strain of gratitude,
On bended knee, with holy fear,
With humble hope, with faith sincere.

“ Before the sun shall raise his head
 To smile upon the blushing day,
Or from his chamber rush to lead
 The young and thin-rob'd dawn away.

“ Before the morn with tresses fair
Shall sail upon the waveless air,
Oh, let thy soul ascend as free,
Thy heart be tun'd to harmony,
And meekly to thy Maker bear,
The early vow, the early prayer,
Unstain'd with shades of earthly care.

“ Kneel like a suppliant at his feet,
 Yet like a child address his throne,
And let an hour so calm, so sweet,
 Be sacred to thy God alone.”

THE QUEEN OF NIGHT.

"The queen of night rode bold and high,
Her path was white with stars,
Her cheek was sanguine, and her eye
Glanc'd on the blood stain'd Mars.

"No word she spake, no sign she made,
Save that her head she bow'd,
As if a cold, good night she bade,
To some departing cloud.

"A fleecy robe was loosely cast,
Around her graceful form,
She hid her forehead from the blast,
Hoarse herald of the storm.

"But soon she staid her rushing car,
And check'd her rapid rein,
For morn beheld her from afar,
And frown'd upon her train.

"The queen of night, and rosy morn,
Together might not dwell;
One came to rouse the slumbering dawn,
The other sought her cell."

TWILIGHT.

"I saw, ere the landscape had faded in night,
The slow-moving twilight with gesture sublime,
As I pensively watch'd the decline of the light,
And listen'd, absorb'd to the foot-fall of time.

"And I said to my heart, as it rose in my breast,
'What wakes thee to sorrow, what moves thee to mourn?
And my heart answer'd quick, with emotion opprest,
'I grieve for the hours, that must never return.'

In the pale hand of twilight, a tablet appear'd,
Though veil'd in her mantle, and muffled with shade;
That this had recorded my errours I fear'd,
And I knew that its traces were never to fade.

VICTORY.

“ Waft not to me the blast of fame,
That swells the trump of victory,
For to my ear it gives the name
Of slaughter, and of misery.

“ Boast not so much of honour's sword,
Wave not so high the victor's plume ;
They point me to the bosom gor'd,
They point me to the blood-stain'd tomb.

“ The boastful shout, the revel loud,
That strive to drown the voice of pain,
What are they but the fickle crowd
Rejoicing o'er their brethren slain ?

“ And ah, through glory's fading blaze,
I see the cottage taper, pale,
Which sheds its faint and feeble rays,
Where unprotected orphans wail :

“ Where the sad widow weeping stands,
As if her day of hope was done :
Where the wild mother clasps her hands,
And asks the victor for her son :

“ Where the lone maid in secret sighs
O'er the lost solace of her heart,
As prostrate, in despair, she lies,
And feels her tortur'd life depart :

“ Where midst that desolated land,
The sire lamenting o'er his son,
Extends his weak and powerless hand,
And finds its only prop is gone.

“ See, how the bands of war and wo
Have rifled sweet domestick bliss ;
And tell me if your laurels grow,
And flourish in a soil like this ?”

One great negative merit of these poems is, that they are almost wholly free from any false taste, from any thing either in thought or style, that is turgid or vulgar. There is much freedom and facility in the manner, a correctness

and harmony in the features, though generally tinged with melancholy; that make us strongly wish, that the writer would devote herself to some work of greater scope and higher character than any of these occasional verses. We think there are one or two passages in the poem *on the Dove's leaving the ark*, which partake of the sublime. The description of the deluge,

“ And slowly as its axle turn'd
The wat'ry planet mov'd and mourn'd,

the whole of the passage ending with these two lines,

“ Nor slightest breath her bosom cheer'd,
Her own soft wings alone she heard,”

If not sublime, which we think it to be, will at least be allowed by all, to be exquisitely beautiful and pathetick.

After considering the indications of genius, afforded by these disconnected poems, the variety and facility of versification they discover, joined to what we have heard of the fair author's solid acquirements, and her power and habit of severe application, we should, if our advice were a little more imposing, earnestly counsel her to devote her mind to some more considerable undertaking. We have in the way of subjects, a rich and various mine that has hardly been opened. Let it be remembered, how much the genius of Scott has struck out from his Scottish highland chiefs, and the border warfare with England; where both men and events are almost beneath the dignity of history; from what rude materials has he constructed and polished his most successful productions! How much more important, how much more varied, how vastly superiour in picturesque effect, the events that took place, on our frontiers, in the course of the seventeenth, and beginning of the eighteenth century! The contests between the English and French, and the intermixture of their savage allies; the splendour of the epoch in the history of those two people at home, was reflected on their distant contests in Canada; the important part played by the various Indian tribes, particularly the Six Nations, whose history is abundantly interesting; the share we took as colonists in these events; the vast revolutions that have since happened among these different nations; all furnish materials at once interesting and grand. There

are so many contrasts involved, that might be rendered highly poetical. The polished French nobleman from the court of Lewis XIV. the dignified British governour, the hardy American colonist, the distinguished chiefs of the Six Nations, the insinuating Jesuit missionary; all present very striking details; and then the magnificence of the scenery,—the cataract, in its gigantick magnificence, that might receive all the waterfalls of Europe united, without perceiving the addition; the lakes whose shores for a century and a half, have been rendered illustrious by so many memorable combats of different nations, all give dignity to the theme. Many romantick adventures of individuals would furnish interesting episodes. The martial events are highly interesting. A peculiar fatality has attended all the combats on the plains of Abraham under the walls of Quebec; at distant periods, three commanders in chief of three different nations have been slain; the French Marquis de Montcalm, the English General Wolfe, and the American General Montgomery. A perusal of Colden's History of the Six Nations, the Baron de la Hontan's travels, and several works in the early history of Virginia, New-England and Canada, would be found replete with characters, incidents, and actions of the most diversified, animated, and picturesque description.